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GEORGIA CHILD FATALITY REVIEW PANEL SEEKS TO ADD “TEETH” TO CURRENT LAW

The Georgia Child Fatality Review Panel has proposed legislation to strengthen the review process of child deaths in the State. Representative Barry Fleming is sponsoring HB479 (co-sponsored by Georganna Sinkfield and Mary Margaret Oliver) that would modify current law. The most significant changes would:

- Assign the District Attorney of each circuit (or his/her designee) as chairperson of local child fatality review committees
- Give the Superior Court Judge on the Panel the authority to issue an order requiring participation of agencies mandated to participate on local child fatality review committees. Failure to comply with such order would be cause for contempt
- Give the Panel the authority to compel the production of documents or the attendance of witnesses pursuant to a subpoena
- Add the director of the Division of Mental Health as a member of the Panel